

## **Messaging for Action: Communicating with businesses about partnerships to protect drinking water quality in the McKenzie River**

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Laura Stroud

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## **Abstract**

This report explores strategies for communicating drinking water protection messages to businesses and encourage participation in a drinking water quality protection program for the McKenzie River. The report includes the findings of a business engagement survey conducted in Spring 2015 in order to determine business' preferences for certain messages. Research showed that a collaboration continuum was a useful, but limited schematic for communicating with businesses, and that businesses are willing to pursue integrated relationships to join a program that benefits the community.

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Robert Parker, Community Service Center

Sue Lurie, Community Service Center

### **Research Team**

Laura Stroud, Community Service Center

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# CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

This report explores strategies for communicating drinking water protection messages to businesses to encourage participation in a drinking water quality protection program for the McKenzie River, which supplies drinking water to Eugene, Oregon. The report includes the findings of a business engagement survey conducted in Spring 2015 that determined business' preferences for certain messages. This effort to determine preferences for certain messages coincided with efforts to determine business' preferences for the structure of the proposed engagement program.

This research is contributing to the Eugene Water and Electrical Board's (EWEB) effort to create a source-water protection program that provides monetary support and restoration resources for upriver landowners who maintain or restore their property in order to contribute to water quality protection in the McKenzie River Watershed.

## Background

EWEB is currently developing a program that encourages landowners to protect or restore riverside property, in order to positively affect the water quality of the McKenzie River, Eugene's sole source of drinking water. This program, called the Voluntary Incentives Program (VIP), provides monetary incentive for eligible landowners who maintain healthy riparian forestlands along the McKenzie River. It also provides restoration pathways for landowners whose properties do not meet the eligibility requirements for receiving monetary incentives. This program is on the leading edge of watershed protection, because of its voluntary approach, coordination of resources from many state and federal funding sources, and coordination of restoration efforts at the watershed scale. (CPW 2013a)

The program is simultaneously developing another innovative approach to source water protection by exploring opportunities for businesses to contribute to drinking water quality protection. A business engagement strategy was part of EWEB's initial vision for meeting source water protection goals (INR 2012). The VIP was intended as a "mechanism that compensates landowners for ecosystem services their properties provide as a way to maintain and improve water quality within the McKenzie River Watershed" (INR 2013). Ratepayers would initially finance the program, but the report identified businesses as a potential additional source of funding.

In a series of focus groups, conducted in 2013, landowners stated that monetary payments would be an important incentive to encourage them to participate, but in-kind benefits from businesses would also be an effective incentive (CPW 2013b). For example, a landowner managing a riparian forest would be open to accepting a monetary dividend for their property's contribution to water quality. At the same time, however, the landowner would be equally open to receiving a voucher for services from a local arborist or landscaper. Likewise, initial feedback from focus groups with businesses indicated that they would like to support watershed

protection, and certain enterprises would be more able and likely to provide in-kind products or services rather than cash donations.

Businesses are increasingly partnering with community-based organizations to achieve goals outside of the traditional business plan (Seitanidi and Crane 2008). Community-based organizations can leverage business resources to better achieve their mission and businesses can receive positive recognition among potential customers. Additionally, businesses are increasingly pursuing corporate social responsibility goals that benefit the community in which they operate.

The complexity and level of organizational integration of these types of partnerships has developed as more businesses and community-based organizations seek ways to work towards common goals.

Creating messages that resonate is essential to recruiting any business to participate in the VIP program. Contributing to the complexity, is EWEB's desire to offer businesses a range of engagement pathways. Businesses may be receptive to a particular message, depending on what type of partnership they are interested in pursuing. EWEB recognizes that not only is it important to develop messages to effectively recruit businesses to the program, but that the type of messages that are successful may depend on the type of relationship that appeals to a business.

This research investigates the effectiveness of selected messages in influencing businesses' decision to take action to protect the drinking water quality in the McKenzie River by joining EWEB's VIP program. The discussion of messaging is framed using a theoretical construct called the collaborative continuum, which is discussed in detail in Chapter 2. The receptiveness of certain messages was analyzed based on business' self-identified relationship preference.

The purpose of this research is to add nuance to existing literature on environmental communication and collaboration by considering desired relationship types when determining the messages to use when recruiting businesses to participate in drinking water quality protection efforts. This research will contribute to the field of environmental communication by integrating theories from collaborative planning.

The research is specific to Eugene, Springfield and McKenzie River area businesses and is intended to inform the way EWEB communicates with potential business partners. The limited response rate limits the generalizability of the results, but the study provides findings that other utilities may find useful when developing their own source water protection programs. This research applies two theoretical frameworks to a real-life example, thereby providing additional insight into those theories while highlighting areas for additional investigation.

## Organization of the Report

**Chapter 2: Framework** - presents the contextual and theoretical framework for the overall study.

**Chapter 3: Research Methods** - presents the purpose and methods used to conduct the study.

**Chapter 4: Findings** - presents the findings of the survey and a cross tabulation of survey results. Includes a discussion of the implications of the findings.

**Appendices:** Survey Instrument

# CHAPTER 2: FRAMEWORK

This chapter describes the contextual and theoretical framework for communicating with businesses in pursuit of cross-sector collaboration for source water protection. This chapter looks at the history of the project, and the premise for payment for ecosystem services and business partnerships. The theoretical framework connects ideas from the field of environmental communication and collaboration and concludes by introducing the projects primary and secondary research questions.

## Contextual Framework

Citizens founded the Eugene Water and Electric board in 1911 after a typhoid outbreak led them to purchase the existing water infrastructure from a private utility and manage the system as a public utility.

The McKenzie River is the only source of drinking water for almost 200,000 people in the Eugene area of Lane County, Oregon. The watershed spans from the Western Cascades to the McKenzie River's confluence with the Willamette River near the cities of Eugene and Springfield. The volcanic geology of the Cascades creates a highly porous surface that collects rainfall and snow melt. These soils serve as a natural reservoir and filter for subsurface water that emerges as a series of springs that form the source for the McKenzie River.

The river collects pollutants from agriculture, forestry, and residential uses as it flows downstream to EWEB's water intake. Increased levels of pollution in the water at the intake point may lead to higher water treatment costs for EWEB. These potential increased treatment costs may be avoided when well-maintained riparian land creates a buffer between the river and sources of pollution. Healthy riverside land also creates a habitat for aquatic species and enhances the scenic quality of the river.

In 2001, EWEB created a source water protection program to address growing threats to water quality of the McKenzie River. The focus of the source water protection program was to address the connection between land use in the watershed and the water quality of the McKenzie River (INR 2012). The focus on source water protection led EWEB to consider a program based on the principles of payment for ecosystems services.

## Payment for Ecosystem Services (PES)

The concept for PES is that the natural environment provides certain services that have economic value, but those values are frequently excluded from traditional economic accounting. For example, undeveloped riparian land may not be generating economic value for the landowner, but EWEB accrues an economic benefit from the land by avoiding treatment costs it would otherwise incur if the natural water filtration processes of the riparian land were lost due to degradation through development or other means. If EWEB could monetize this economic

benefit for the landowner, it would provide incentive for the landowner to be good stewards of healthy riparian areas and refrain from activities that degrade them.

EWEB source water protection staff held focus groups with upstream landowners to gauge interest in this type of program and found that landowners were receptive to the idea (CPW 2013a). EWEB created the VIP, which would provide financial incentives to landowners who maintained high-quality riparian buffers on their property. The quality of the riverside land must meet a certain threshold, and the monetary incentive provided to the landowner depends on factors like the total area enrolled as well as environmental factors that measure the property's ability to provide natural water quality protection processes. Property owners whose land does not currently meet the quality threshold for qualification can work with EWEB to perform stewardship projects that improve the property's ability to provide the desired ecosystem services.

## **Business Partnerships**

Results from the landowner focus groups found that direct payment was preferred in some cases, but that in-kind or non-monetary benefits could also provide incentive for landowners to want to enroll in the program. EWEB watershed protection staff envisioned partnering with businesses that could provide this additional incentive to landowners while providing VIP funding beyond base funding sources. This initial conceptualization quickly expanded to including businesses as fellow stakeholders in the watershed who might have their own motives and desires to participate outside of providing incentives for landowners.

Researchers at the University of Oregon and Oregon State University initially held three exploratory focus groups in 2013 as part of a USDA grant (CPW 2013b). With assistance from the Community Service Center at the University of Oregon, EWEB held a business workshop in the fall of 2014 and, following that, again used focus groups in 2015 to build on the initial 2013 focus group outcomes in order to gather input from businesses owners and representatives on program development preferences.

Responses at the first 2015 focus group identified challenges with the messages and information EWEB was using to communicate with businesses:

First, the messages initially used resonated with only a small segment of the business representatives present at the first focus group. Some businesses seemed to immediately understand the connections between the threats to water quality and EWEB's proposed solution. Other businesses were less certain that a problem existed or that EWEB's proposed solution would be effective.

Second, business owners and representatives participated at low rates in the focus group and survey. It is expected that a lack of time was the primary cause of this lack of participation, but there are other possible causes. Businesses who participated in the focus groups typically saw value in the proposed project, but were not interested in using their time to develop the program. EWEB was asking businesses how they would like to participate in the program, but time-strapped businesses preferred to hear what EWEB was offering, and then decided if they were interested in participating. As such, the initial messages used to connect with

businesses would be important for quickly connecting with businesses in a way that would influence them to take action.

Finally, not all businesses immediately saw their stake in the issue of water quality protection. EWEB used a similar focus-group approach for working with upriver landowners to develop the program. The landowners were responsive to the engagement because the Landowner Advisory Committee was a welcomed alternative to the regulatory approach EWEB had previously attempted with the proposal for mandatory riparian development setbacks. Businesses did not have this existing combination of threat and incentive so the messages and approaches developed through the landowner focus groups were not as relevant when presented to businesses.

Project partners recognized that finding the appropriate messages to effectively communicate the program and its goals to businesses would be important to designing a program that businesses would want to join. This realization served as the starting point for developing this research that tests messages' effectiveness in convincing businesses to take action for water quality protection by joining EWEB's VIP program.

## Theoretical Framework

This research lies at the intersection of collaboration theory, environmental communication theory and business sustainability theory. This inquiry seeks to illuminate what messages resonate with businesses presented with the opportunity to participate in a water quality protection program. This links well-established bodies of research, collaborative theory and environmental communication. The intention is to identify potential connections between the type of collaborative relationship businesses seek and the type of communication businesses prefer. Business sustainability literature provides information about how businesses decide to pursue corporate social responsibility programs, a necessary first-step for a business to be motivated to become a partner in EWEB's VIP.

### Environmental Communication

Much of the environmental communication literature deals with how certain types of communication influence individuals (Brulle 2010, Obermiller 1995, Lakoff 2010, Foust and Murphy 2009), or agencies (Reichert et. al. 2005) to take or not take a certain environmentally-relevant action. Authors measure how values, risk perception, perceived accuracy, and prior knowledge interact with the introduced messages.

Many studies focus on messages' influence on decision-making at the individual level. According to Lakoff (2010), individuals unconsciously use "frames" to process new information. The frame provides the thought structure by which an individual understands and processes relationships, roles, and connections. Individuals receiving information that contradicts their existing frames are more likely to dismiss the information than restructure their frame. Understanding complex information requires a series of complimentary frames that enable the individual to fully process and accept the information. Lakoff warns that since individuals

process information through frames developed throughout an individual's lifetime, simply stating a problem with the correct words is not enough to even guarantee an individual accepts the given information as true, much less influence him or her to take action. The information must be able to exist in the recipient's frame.

In 2013, researchers at the University of Oregon and Oregon State University administered a survey with the intention of determining whether EWEB ratepayers and landowners along the McKenzie River would support EWEB taking action to protect drinking water quality (Community Planning Workshop 2013). Eighty percent of survey respondents indicated that they were supportive or very supportive of efforts to protect the McKenzie River Watershed. The survey also indicated general support that EWEB would be trusted to administer such a program. These results suggest that ratepayer respondents have the appropriate frames to synthesize the idea of a public utility taking action to protect drinking water.

The indication that there exists a cognitive frame for understanding and synthesizing information about a utility-run water quality protection program allows this research to work at a finer level of communication detail: messaging. Since individuals have developed the frame for this specific environmental topic, this research can focus on the specific appeals used to encourage an individual to undertake a desired action.

Environmental communication literature tends to focus on how messages influence the individual. For this particular research, I am interested in communicating with businesses. It is true that individuals make decisions on behalf of businesses, but it is not enough to simply assume that individuals who represent businesses would make the same choices when making a decision on his or her business' behalf versus his or her own behalf. For this reason, it was necessary to apply collaborative theory as a second theoretical framework for this study.

## **Collaborative Theory**

The primary questions this research seeks to answer are germane to the field of environmental communication. However, an understanding of collaborative theory is necessary to understand how findings from the field of environmental communication can be legitimately applied to this research. Collaborative theory provides a framework for conceptualizing the relationships necessary to create and implement EWEB's desired business engagement strategy.

Authors dealing with collaborative planning (Margerum 2011, Innes and Booher 2010) seek to explain how collaborative relationships can work to solve complex problems. Innes and Booher describe how creating intentional avenues for discourse around planning problems can create agreements and solutions to address complex issues. Margerum adds that using this established consensus to achieve action toward solutions is an essential part of the collaborative process.

Two aspects of a collaborative planning process are first, that the process include diverse group of stakeholders, and second, that the problem addressed be multifaceted, complex, and interdependent. Both of these elements are present in the current situation.

While both Margerum's and Innes and Booher's approaches to collaborative planning approaches are informative to this situation, the most appropriate collaborative framework for this research project is James Austin's Collaborative Continuum. The Collaborative Continuum is a framework that describes relationships between businesses and nonprofit organizations. The Collaborative Continuum defines these relationships based on specific relationship elements, such as the scope of activities addressed and strategic value of the interaction. Other elements are listed in Figure I below.

The continuum divides relationships into three stages. Stage I encompasses the traditional philanthropic relationship between businesses and nonprofits where businesses offer a financial donation with little additional involvement. In this stage, there is little connection between the business' donation and the business' mission. Stage II is characterized by a transactional relationship where both parties act individually and achieve separate but mutual benefits. Stage III references a more integrated relationship in which the business and nonprofit share resources and can meet important aspects of their missions by working together.

### **Collaborative Continuum**

<i>Nature of Relationship</i>	<i>Stage I (Philanthropic)</i>	<i>Stage II (Transactional)</i>	<i>Stage III (Integrative)</i>
Level of engagement	Low	⇒	⇒
Importance to mission	Peripheral	⇒	⇒
Magnitude of resources	Small	⇒	⇒
Scope of activities	Narrow	⇒	⇒
Interaction level	Infrequent	⇒	⇒
Managerial complexity	Simple	⇒	⇒
Strategic value	Minor	⇒	⇒

Figure 1 Source: Austin, James E. "Strategic collaboration between nonprofits and business." *Nonprofit and voluntary sector quarterly* 29, no. suppl 1 (2000): 69-97

The three partnership characterizations of the continuum are not discrete. The variables within a single partnership may fall at different locations along the continuum, but characteristics likely cluster around a certain point. Partnerships may shift along the continuum throughout their lifetime, for example, beginning as philanthropic relationship and shifting towards transactional as the parties grow accustomed to working together. Similarly, partnerships that began as integrative can shift towards philanthropic if the goals of an integrative partnership are met, but the parties do not wish to dissolve their relationship. Austin emphasizes that no location on the continuum is better or worse than another.

The continuum can be used as a tool to evaluate an existing relationship or identify the characteristics of an aspirational relationship. For example, partners in an integrative relationship may use the tool to diagnose issues within the relationship, thereby identifying variables where their partnership is exhibiting characteristics more typical of a transactional relationship.

Austin's collaborative continuum framework was created to address partnerships between businesses and nonprofits, but as a public utility, EWEB is not a nonprofit organization. In this scenario, the role EWEB is filling is essentially identical to the nonprofit role as Austin describes it. EWEB is initiating the interaction and is seeking the partnerships as a way to better achieve its mission. Additionally, as a public utility, EWEB does not have shareholders who benefit financially from the utility's actions and projects. EWEB is undertaking this project as a way to achieve a mission outside of financial gain, similarly to the way nonprofits function. The need for this comparison is further warranted by the lack of literature regarding public utility/business relationships. Articles that did address partnerships with public utilities place the utility in the business role, with the nonprofits as the partnership initiators (Harvey and Schafer 2001). In this case, the reverse is true. EWEB is acting as an environmental stakeholder approaching businesses for their support.

The collaborative continuum is a framework for conceptualizing the variables of the many different types of partnerships EWEB has envisioned as part of its business engagement strategy. This research uses the collaborative continuum as a tool to categorize the types of relationships businesses desired. The continuum identifies elements of collaborative relationships that participants may not be fully aware of or consider as important aspects. These elements allow EWEB to strategically consider the relationships they would like to pursue with businesses.

## **Business Sustainability**

The field of business sustainability investigates the growing awareness among the business community that there are benefits to pursuing projects that achieve goals outside of simply conducting business as usual. Robert Pojasek defines business sustainability as "a means for achieving an organization's vision and mission... the application of knowledge, skills, tools and techniques to the organization's activities, products and services in order to accomplish [both sustainability and business goals]" (2007, 2).

Additionally, this field examines why businesses are compelled to pursue business sustainability goals that benefit the community. Besser and Jarnigan find that business sustainability practices are influenced by the level of integration of a business's manager as an individual and the level of economic integration of the business itself into the community in which it operates. Businesses with higher levels of integration are more likely to pursue business sustainability practices (2010). This shows that both personal and economic networks are important to consider when determining a business' likelihood to participate in a community-based sustainability program.

The growth of this field indicates the increased understanding that all businesses have an impact on the environment. Businesses are addressing this concern through social responsibility partnerships with other organizations, typically non-profit organizations, which provide the businesses with ways to support community efforts outside the scope of their typical operating objectives. Seitanidi and Crane describe the process of creating business and nonprofit partnerships as one that must be generated and designed specifically for the relationship between one particular business and non profit organization (2008). They provide generalized

descriptions of this process, but there is no discussion of a situation where a non-profit entity creates a program in which businesses can enroll at different levels of engagement.

EWEB's atypical situation, in which a chartered public utility, and therefore not a private-sector entity, is recruiting businesses to join a program designed for environmental protection, highlights the need for effective communication. Literature indicates that these partnerships are something businesses consider, but may not know how to implement without the assistance of a nonprofit organization. Focus group results show that drinking water quality is an issue that businesses care about and are willing to take action on.

These implications suggest the importance of fully understanding the viability of messages that communicate the need for business support of water quality protection, and how this interacts with a business' characteristics and propensity for a certain type of engagement.

The connections among recruitment message, desired relationship type and engagement pathway are nuanced and interrelated. This research tests the efficacy of certain messages and the preferred relationship types businesses want to pursue related to drinking water quality protection. This assumes that either a) recruitment messages influence which types of engagement pathways a business will consider, or b) that a business' inherent characteristics predispose it to prefer a certain relationship type, and will respond to messages that appeal to that predisposition. This research attempts to examine whether there is a relationship between recruitment message and relationship type. The left-hand arrow in Figure 2 below depicts this relationship. Though this interaction is the focus of the research, it is important to acknowledge that a business' preferences for different engagement pathways influences the process as well.

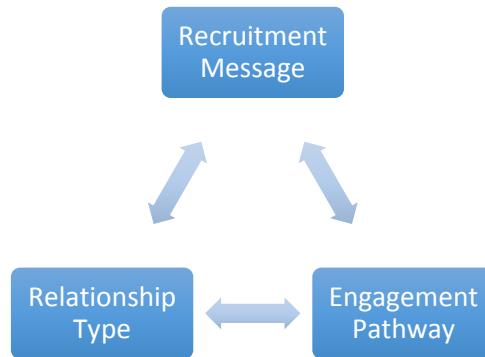


Figure 2 - Conceptual framework of the interactions of programmatic elements: recruitment messages, engagement pathways, and relationship types,

## Research Questions

This research will attempt to answer the following questions.

## **Primary Research Questions**

How can collaborative theory inform engagement strategy creation?

How do businesses perceive benefits of participation based on different environmental messages?

## **Secondary questions**

How do businesses perceive benefit and threat messages?

Does messaging influence business' propensity to take action?

# **CHAPTER 3: RESEARCH METHODS**

This chapter describes the purpose and methods used to conduct the survey process to gather information about business' preferences for communication. The chapter includes the purpose of the survey, the structure of the survey, and the methods for implementing the survey.

## **Methods**

The primary method of data collection for this research was a survey. The survey was created with input from Community Service Center (CSC) staff and EWEB staff. The survey was open for two weeks, beginning on Monday, April 27 and ending on Monday, May 11.

## **Focus Groups**

This research was conducted in conjunction with a series of three focus groups with a total of eight unique participants (some participants attended more than one meeting). EWEB held the focus groups in the winter of 2015. The focus group held April 6, 2015 focused on messaging and contributed to the revision of messages used in the survey instrument and provided in-person feedback about reactions to the proposed messages.

## **Survey**

A survey was the primary form of data collection for this research. The survey quickly and easily generated input from a variety of Eugene, Springfield and McKenzie River area businesses.

## **Purpose**

The purpose of the survey is to determine business' preferences for program messaging intended to influence businesses to take action to protect the drinking water quality of the McKenzie River by supporting the Voluntary Incentive Program (VIP). The survey also examines which type of interaction businesses prefer based on the elements of the Collaborative Continuum. Specifically, the survey tests:

1. How likely a particular message is to convince a business to take action to protect drinking water quality in the McKenzie River.
2. Business' preferred levels of interaction with EWEB, as based on the collaborative continuum.
3. Determine whether a business' preferred interaction level influences which types of communication the business prefers.

The survey was also strategically used as a way to introduce businesses contacts to the idea of VIP sponsorship. Although the survey was not used explicitly as a tool for recruiting businesses into the VIP sponsorship, it will provide a reference point for future contact regarding recruitment for VIP sponsorship.

## **Sample Design**

The business contacts used for this survey are a non-random sample of Eugene, Springfield and McKenzie River area businesses. Businesses were identified for contact based on their industry and the availability of email contact information from the business' website or other online source. Many of the businesses identified for contact met one or more of the following criteria:

- Business depends on clean water to produce a product or provide a service
- Business uses large volumes of water to operate
- Business depends on McKenzie River watershed to operate
- Business has an impact on water quality

## **Message Creation**

The messages tested in the survey included values messaging and motivation messages. These two categories of messages were selected because of the understanding that businesses would need to identify with a value proposition that the program offered in order to participate, but also that the business would need a motivating factor that would provide some perceived benefit to the business itself.

### **Values Messaging**

The value messages created fell into three primary categories: Community Perception Messages that highlight community values, Protection Messages that highlight elements of the McKenzie River that the VIP will protect, and Threat Messages that highlight elements of the McKenzie River that may be at risk without protection. These messages were created by EWEB and the Community Service Center and were tested with the 2015 business panel focus group before being included in the survey.

The messages developed are listed below:

Community Perception Messages:

- The McKenzie River is central to the health of our economy and community.
- The McKenzie River is more than just a river; it's an icon that defines the area's identity

Protection Messages:

- The McKenzie River should be protected for future generations to continue providing clean water, recreation, economic and community health, and identity.
- Protecting the McKenzie River Watershed will conserve important habitat for many different plant and animal species.
- Protecting the McKenzie River will conserve fish species like salmon, steelhead and trout.
- Protecting the McKenzie River will maintain the river's high water quality.

- Protecting the McKenzie River will protect Eugene's source of clean drinking water.

#### Threat Messages:

- Threats to the McKenzie River will pollute and degrade a highly valued community asset.
- Threats to McKenzie River water quality will result in higher treatment costs that will be passed on to ratepayers.
- Threats to McKenzie River water quality will degrade habitat for sport fish species such as trout and steelhead.
- Threats to McKenzie River water quality will not go away on their own and will likely get worse without action.

## Motivation Messaging

Motivation messaging was created with the understanding that businesses would be unlikely to participate without the existence of perceived benefits that would provide additional motivation for participation. These messages were created by EWEB and the Community Service Center and were tested with the 2015 business panel focus group before being included in the survey. The motivation messages include:

- If my business participated in EWEB's VIP, it would be because I want my business to contribute to the community.
- If my business participated in EWEB's VIP, it would be because I want my business to be a good steward to the environment.
- If my business participated in EWEB's VIP, it would be because I want my business to protect our community's natural resources.
- If my business participated in EWEB's VIP, it would be because it is the right thing to do.
- If my business participated in EWEB's VIP, it would be because I believe my business impacts the environment and I want to mitigate those impacts.
- If my business participated in EWEB's VIP, it would be because my business will receive positive recognition in EWEB's newsletters to customers.
- If my business participated in EWEB's VIP, it would be because my business will receive positive recognition at community events that EWEB hosts like EWEB's Earth Day Celebration.
- If my business participated in EWEB's VIP, it would be because my business will receive positive recognition on EWEB's social media sites.
- If my business participated in EWEB's VIP, it would be because my business will receive positive recognition to landowners along the McKenzie River.
- If my business participated in EWEB's VIP, it would be because my business will get connected to EWEB's 80,000 customers.

## Survey Creation

The Community Service Center created the survey tool with four sections:

1. Business' preference for values messaging: this section tested how likely or unlikely a message was to influence a business to take action to conserve drinking water quality by joining EWEB's VIP program.
2. Business' preference for levels of engagement as determined by selected elements of the collaborative continuum: this section tested respondents agreement or disagreement with statements describing relationship elements of the collaborative continuum.
3. Business' motivations for joining a drinking water quality protection program: this section tested respondents' agreement or disagreement with statements summarizing potential motivations for joining the EWEB's VIP.
4. Characteristics of responding businesses: this section provided self-reported demographic data about the businesses that the respondents represented.

The survey was rigorously edited through multiple drafts before being built in Qualtrics survey-building software into a questionnaire form to be emailed out to businesses.

The full text of the survey is available in Appendix I.

## **Respondent Recruitment**

The survey was emailed to approximately 130 Eugene, Springfield and McKenzie River area businesses on Monday, April 27th. The contact list was compiled from an existing list of business contacts that was created to recruit businesses for landowner and business focus groups. The purpose of those focus groups was to test the feasibility and interest for the VIP's proposed payment for ecosystem services structure. Additional businesses contacts were added for recruitment for the business-specific focus groups held in 2015.

These criteria were not used as formal categorizations, but served as guidelines to ensure that the contact list included businesses with a variety of relationships to clean water and the McKenzie River watershed.

Businesses received three contact emails during the two-week survey period, including one introductory email and two reminder emails. Responses were limited to one per email address. The number of responses varied by question with 24 as the most number of responses for an individual question and 11 as the least number of responses for an individual question.

## **Data Analysis Method**

The data was analyzed based on reporting of respondents' answers to the survey questions. Results were compiled in Excel to create tables and graphs illustrating the data. Values and motivation messages were ranked in order of popularity, based on the number of businesses that responded either in the "Strongly Agree/Very Likely" category or "Agree/Likely" category. The survey also included a comment section where respondents could provide personalized thoughts about the question outside of the Likert scale responses.

Cross tabulation was used to analyze the values and motivation messaging results with the partnership elements results to gain insight about the relationship

between the messages respondents preferred and the type of collaborative relationship they prefer. Cross tabulations were generated by the Qualtrics software and formatted in Microsoft Excel.

## **Data Limitations**

The main limitation of the data gathered for this research is the small sample size of the data gathered. Response rates varied based on the questions placement within the survey. Questions towards the beginning of the survey received more responses than later questions.

The question required to analyze the cross tabulation recorded only 11 responses. While the questions about Value Messages and Motivation Messages received 21 and 18 responses, respectively, only 11 of these responses were considered in the cross tabulation analysis, limiting the possibility of applying some responses to answering the primary research question.

Results of this data should not be generalized to the Eugene, Springfield and McKenzie River area business community due to a lack of randomized sampling in generating a recruitment list. Instead, the data can be used to anecdotally suggest which messages will be most effective for reaching the business community.

The intended application of the survey results was to generate a set of data that could be used to investigate the interaction of environmental communication theory and collaborative theory and use a local context to highlight areas where the two fields intersect. While a small data set limits the overall usefulness of the data, this research objective can still be explored with the small sample size generated.

# CHAPTER 4: FINDINGS

This chapter presents the results from the survey of business owners and representatives conducted in April of 2015 with a total of 24 submitted surveys. The summary of the survey results are organized into findings about messaging, findings about the collaborative continuum, and the cross tabulation of messaging and collaborative continuum findings. The chapter also discusses the implications of these findings with an emphasis on how they are relevant to EWEB's business engagement efforts. Finally, the chapter includes suggestions for research that can build on the findings of this report.

## **Survey Findings**

The survey was designed to gather information about which recruitment messages resonate most effectively with businesses and which types of collaborative relationships are most appealing to businesses. The results from these two considerations were cross tabulated to determine if there was a relationship between the messages business preferred and the type of relationships businesses preferred.

## **Values Messaging**

The messaging section of the survey tested 11 messages regarding drinking water quality protection in the McKenzie River Watershed. The messages were created with input from EWEB staff, CSC staff, and business owners and representatives using the methods described Chapter 3. Messages included two messages that focused on community perceptions of the McKenzie River, five protection messages with information on aspects of the McKenzie River that the VIP would protect, and four threat messages with information about aspects of the McKenzie River that might be damaged without protection efforts.

Figure 3 lists messages based on the percentage of businesses that responded that the message was "Very Likely" or "Likely" to influence them to take action to protect the drinking water quality of the McKenzie River.

The three messages most likely to influence a business to take action to protect drinking water quality are listed below. They are listed in order of the messages with the highest percentage of respondents who answered "strongly agree" or "agree" to how likely the statement was to influence them to take action:

1. The McKenzie River should be protected for future generations to continue providing clean water, recreation, economic and community health, and identity. (95 percent)
2. Protecting the McKenzie River will protect Eugene's source of clean drinking water. (95 percent)
3. Protecting the McKenzie River Watershed will conserve important habitat for many different plant and animal species. (76 percent)

The three least popular messages ordered with the highest-scoring message first are:

1. Threats to McKenzie River water quality will result in higher treatment costs that will be passed on to ratepayers. (75 percent)
2. Threats to McKenzie River water quality will not go away on their own and will likely get worse without action. (62 percent)
3. The McKenzie River is more than just a river; it's an icon that defines the area's identity. (54 percent)

The general trend observed in these findings is that businesses overall prefer protection messages, and are less likely to respond to threat messages. Community perception messages ranked in the middle and at the bottom of the rankings.

## Messages for influencing businesses to take action to protect the drinking water quality of the McKenzie River.

n = 24

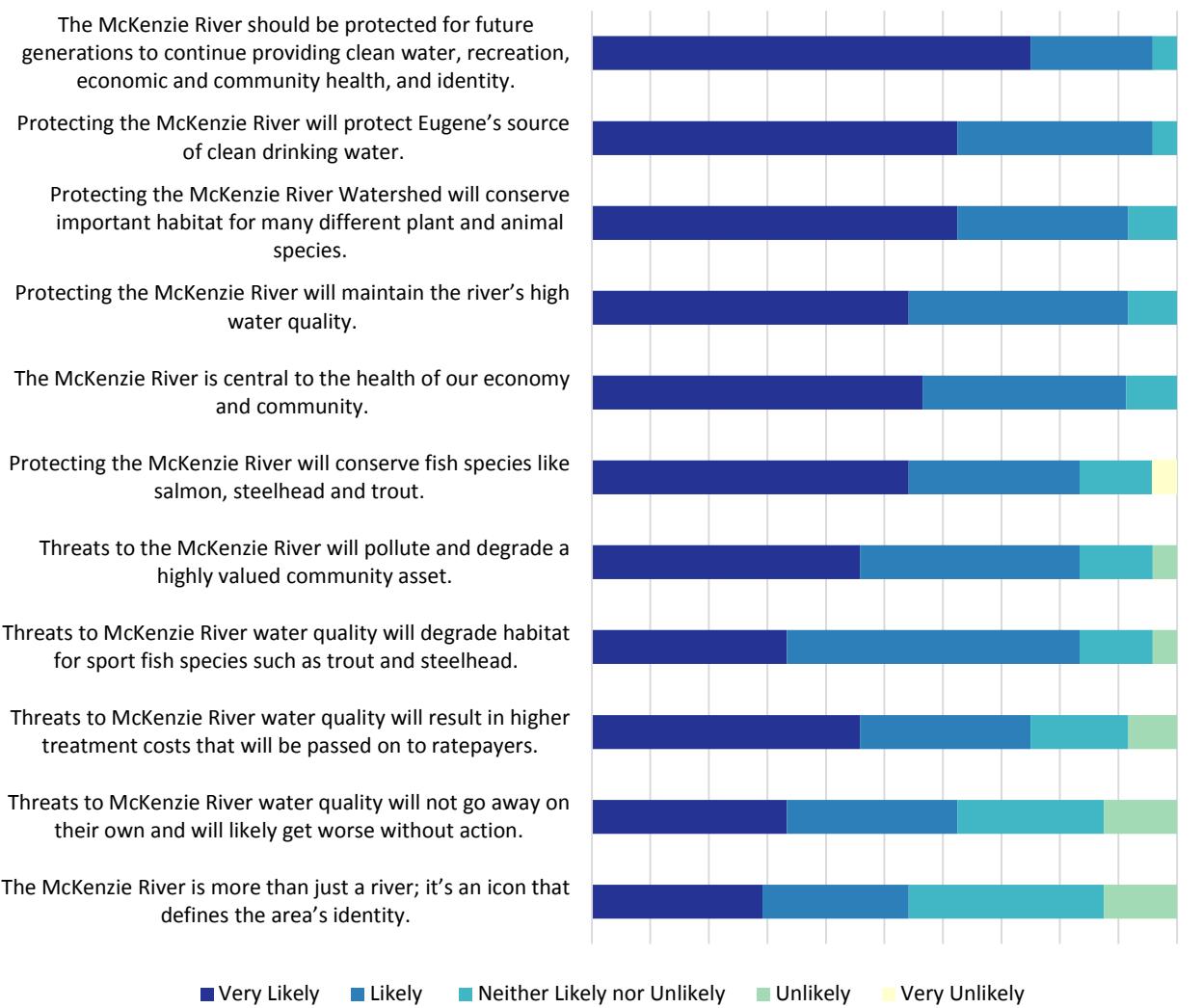


Figure 3

### Motivational Messages

The motivational messaging section of the survey tested 10 messages regarding potential motivations for businesses to partner with EWEB to protect drinking water quality by joining the VIP. The messages were created using the process described in Chapter 3.

Figure 4 lists messages based on the number of businesses that responded "Strongly Agree" or "Agree" with the motivation statement presented.

The three most popular motivation messages ordered with the highest-scoring message first are:

- If my business participated in EWEB's VIP, it would be because I want my business to contribute to the community. (78 percent)
- If my business participated in EWEB's VIP, it would be because I want my business to be a good steward to the environment. (78 percent)
- If my business participated in EWEB's VIP, it would be because I want my business to protect our community's natural resources. (76 percent)

The three least popular messages ordered with the highest-scoring message first are:

- If my business participated in EWEB's VIP, it would be because my business will receive positive recognition on EWEB's social media sites. (41 percent)
- If my business participated in EWEB's VIP, it will be because my business will receive positive recognition to landowners along the McKenzie River. (41 percent)
- If my business participated in EWEB's VIP, it will be because my business will get connected to EWEB's 80,000 customers. (23 percent)

The general trend observed in these findings is that respondents overall prefer agreeing with altruistic motivations rather than benefit motivations.

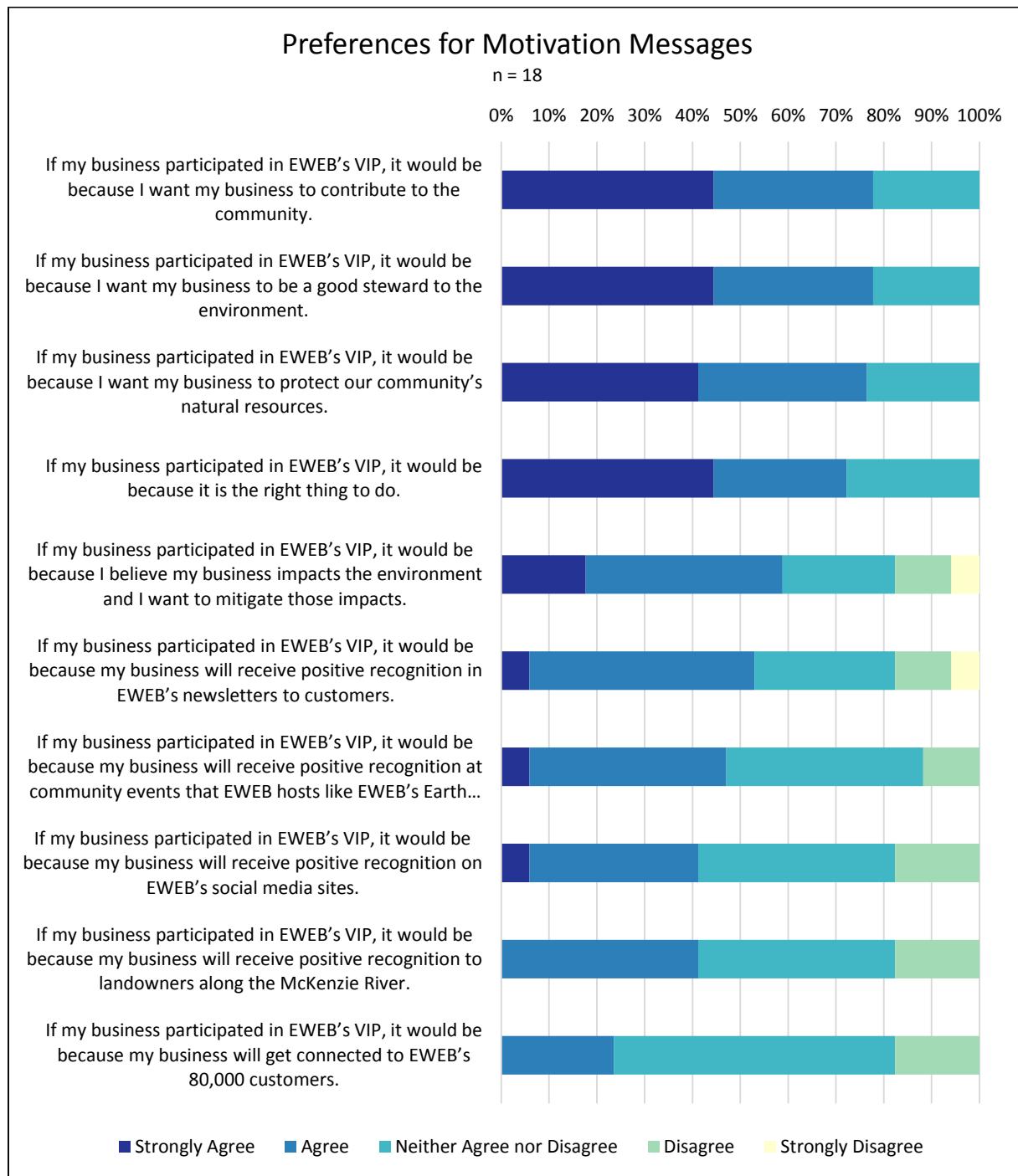


Figure 4

## Collaboration Continuum Findings

The collaboration continuum section of the survey tested business' preferences for six defined relationship elements of a collaborative relationship with EWEB. The elements tested are elements of collaborative relationships as suggested by Austin's concept of a collaborative continuum as described in Chapter 2 (Austin

2000). The elements tested were selected based on their relevance to the types of relationships EWEB envisions having with VIP business partners. Survey respondents read descriptions of relationship elements that corresponded with Austin's conceptualization of philanthropic, transactional, and integrative relationships. Responses indicated the respondent's interest in the relationship type descriptions on a scale of Strongly Agree to Strongly Disagree.

Relationship elements tested included:

- Importance to mission
- Breadth of donation type
- Scope of activities
- Level of interaction
- Leadership relationship
- Strategic value

The results from three of the relationship elements showed that respondents had a clear preference for a certain relationship type based on the percentage of respondents who indicated that they "Strongly Agree" or "Agree" that they would be interested in a certain relationship type description. For the other three relationship elements, the percentage of respondents that responded that they "Strongly Agree" or "Agree" with the relationship type description were all within 15 percent of one another, indicating that there was no clear preference for the relationship type descriptions for that relationship element.

### **Relationship Elements with Preference**

Respondents indicated interest in an integrative type relationship in regards to the "Importance to Mission" relationship element, a transactional type relationship in regards to the "Level of Interaction" relationship element, and both transactional and integrative type relationships in the "Breadth of Donation Types" relationship element. Philanthropic type relationships did not rank highly for any of these elements.

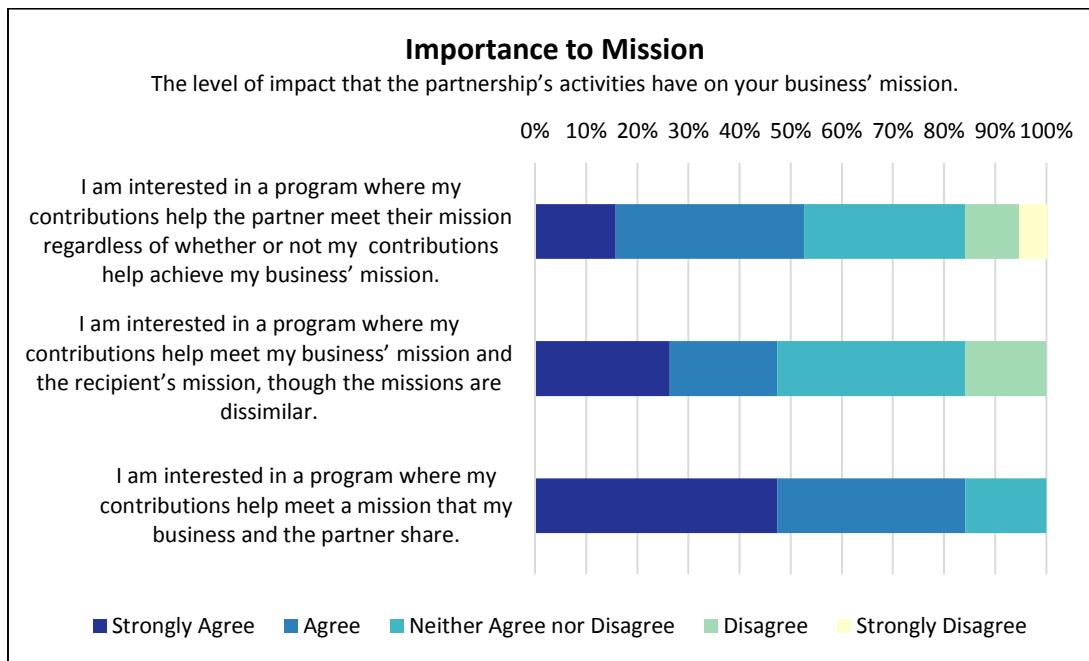


Figure 5

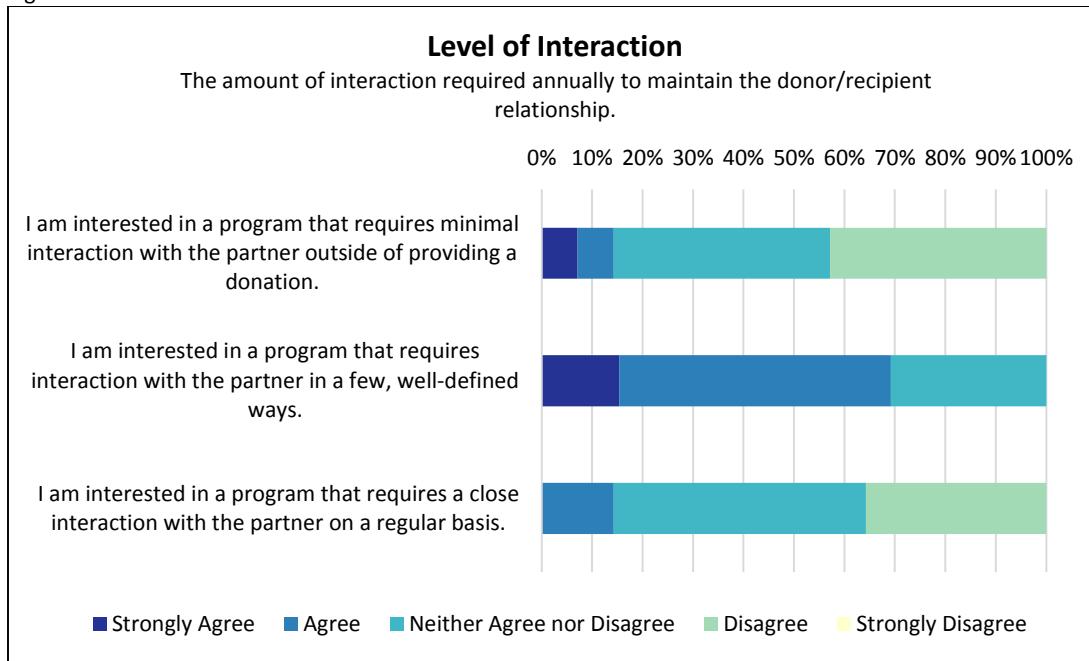


Figure 6

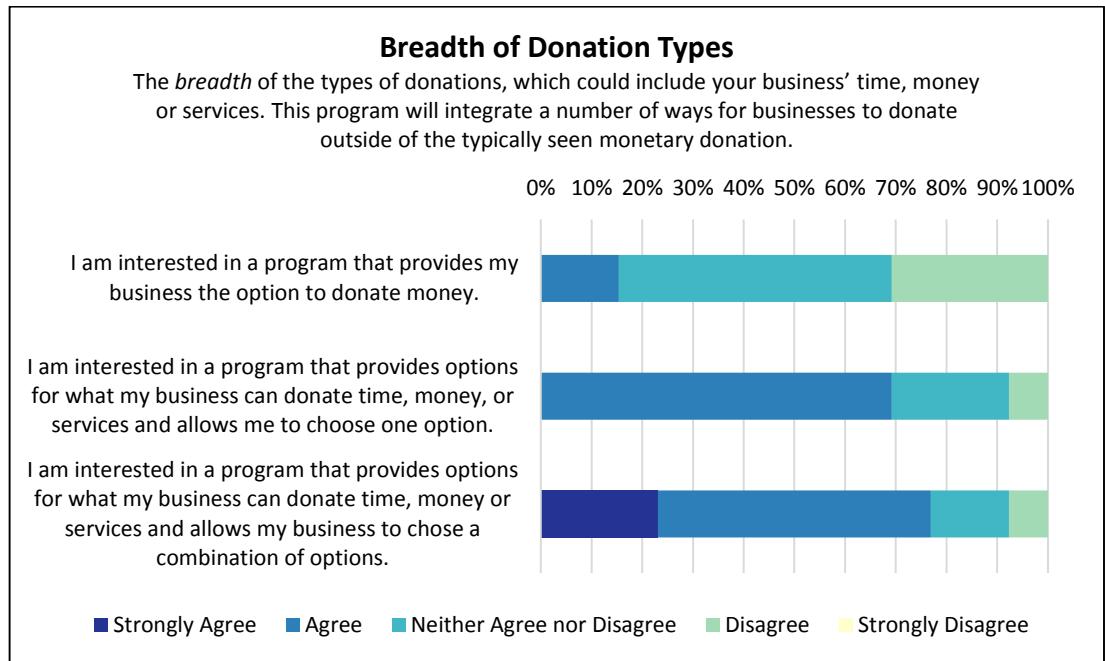


Figure 7

### Relationship Elements with No Preference

Respondents indicated no clear preference for relationship types in the “Scope of Activities”, “Leadership Relationship”, and “Strategic Value” relationship elements. The percentage of respondents indicating that they “Strongly Agree” or “Agree” with the statements were within 15 percent for all relationship type descriptions.

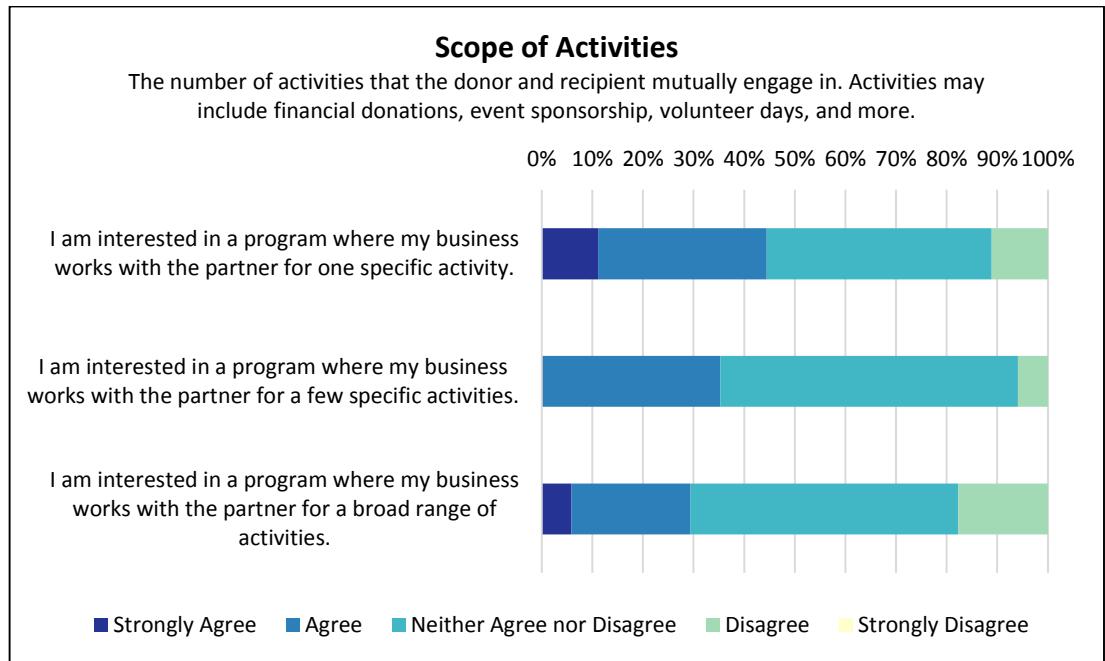


Figure 8

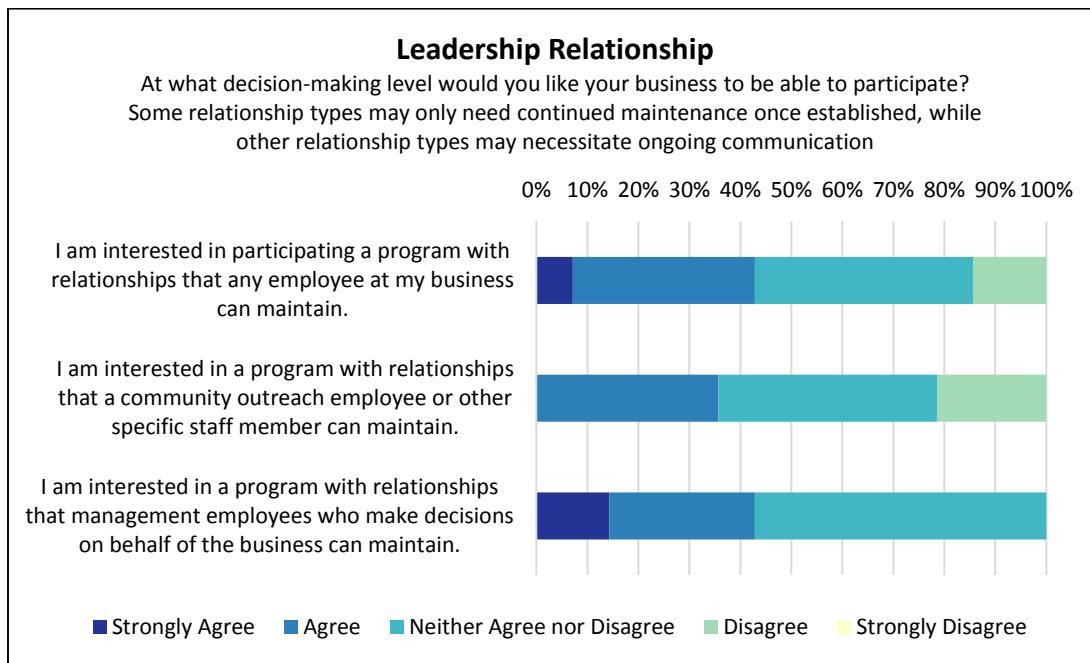


Figure 9

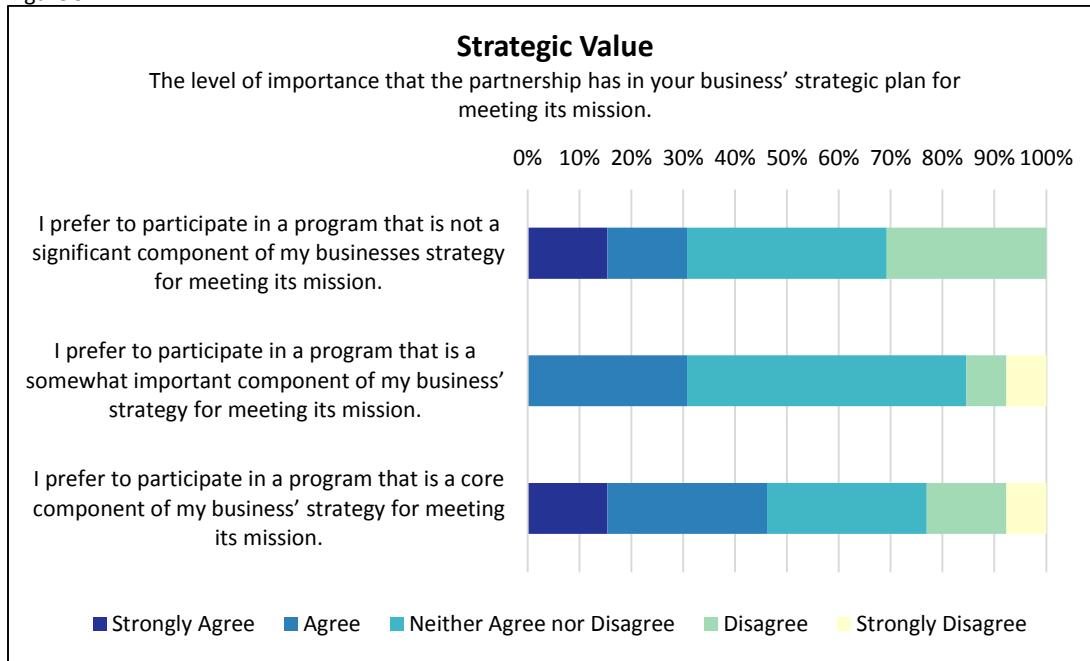


Figure 10

## Cross Tabulation of Messaging and Collaborative Continuum Findings

The final element of the findings is to consider the relationship between message preference and relationship type preference. The cross tabulation of respondent's message preference and relationship preference will indicate whether businesses

that prefer a certain type of relationship respond differently to the presented messages.

The survey asked respondents to select which relationship type (philanthropic, transactional or integrative) they generally preferred based on the relationship type descriptions included in survey questions. The forced choice was necessary to enable a cross tabulation analysis. The 11 responses are included in the Figure 11. The low response rate for this question limits the strength of the findings.

Preferred Engagement Type	
Philanthropic	2
Transactional	4
Integrative	4
None	1

Figure 11

The purpose of this research was to apply collaboration and environmental communication theory to explore and inform EWEB's creation of a business engagement program for the VIP, a program that engages landowners in watershed protection to preserve drinking water quality in the McKenzie River. The application of collaborative theory provided a useful construct for exploring business partnership preferences. Survey results indicated that businesses identified more strongly with certain motivations for potentially joining the program. A limited number of responses to a question required for the cross tabulation analysis limited the strength of the conclusions drawn but suggests opportunities for further research.

## Primary Research Questions

### How can collaborative theory inform engagement strategy creation?

Collaborative theory, in the form of Austin's collaborative continuum, which provides a typology of relationships between businesses and nonprofits, was applied retroactively to relationship types EWEB had already developed for the business VIP. The development of the potential engagement strategies was based on research of existing collaboration projects in other communities. However, the collaboration continuum provided a useful framework for understanding the multiple aspects of the relationships EWEB was pursuing.

The application of collaborative theory to this project also adds value to the academic discussion regarding the collaborative continuum. Austin's 2000 article regarding of the collaborative continuum describes one nonprofit/business partnership that evolves over time from a low-interaction level, to a highly-integrated partnership. The example is illuminating but leaves questions about the translatability of the idea. Though the sample size of this project was small, the survey elicited responses from businesses identifying with each of the three continuum levels, philanthropic, transactional, and integrative. This offers justification of EWEB's effort to provide a range of options for participation to

ensure the success of the program. It also shows that businesses desire community interaction from their participation, and want to interact with EWEB and the community beyond providing financial support of the program.

In his article, Austin indicates that his framework can be used aspirationally, as a way to determine what level of interaction an emerging business/nonprofit partnership would like to achieve. The program development and survey process indicate that this is a useful application of the continuum for planning and program development purposes; however, this research suggests the categories are less useful for communicating partnership ideas with businesses.

The survey responses showed that businesses were able to agree or disagree with descriptions of how a relationship element would look regarding each collaboration type. However, when asked to self-select the collaboration type that most appealed to them, businesses were unable or unwilling to choose a category. One possibility is that the language of the collaboration continuum is too academic to communicate the intended meanings to businesses quickly and effectively. Another possibility is that businesses simply felt too constrained or uncertain to self-select into a category.

Given the challenge of communicating the collaborative continuum itself, there are a few implications for further research to continue exploring the application of the collaboration continuum to researching nonprofit/business partnerships:

- Determine if the collaborative continuum provides useful messages for business recruitment.
- If so, how can the ideas of the collaboration continuum be integrated into communication in a way that both preserves the intention and meaning of the relationship types and is also easily communicated to businesses?

## **How do businesses perceive benefits of participation based on different environmental messages?**

This research question attempts to explore business's motivations for joining the VIP. The messages tested correspond to altruistic motives and benefit motives (i.e. "What will I get out of joining the program?"). Understanding how businesses perceive the benefits of participation is important to understanding how to communicate with businesses in a way that will resonate with how businesses are motivated.

The results of this question loosely suggest that businesses more strongly identified with messages related to altruistic motivations over more concrete benefits such as recognition in a newsletter. Though the results are not robust, this data could provide a suggestion for how EWEB can frame program benefits in recruitment materials. Rather than presenting the benefits the business will receive from participation as "motivations" for participating, recruitment materials can emphasize altruistic motivations and present concrete benefits as additional incentive, rather than a core motivating factor.

The question required for the cross tabulation analysis had an N of 11, which limits the possibility of drawing conclusions from this analysis. The cross tabulation of this

question with business's preferred collaboration type was intended to show whether business's motivations differed based on a business's preferred collaboration type. The cross tabulation analysis showed no clear trends or suggested trends in the data. It is impossible to determine whether this means there is no relation between preferred collaboration type and motivations, or whether the sample size is too small to reveal trends.

## **Secondary questions**

### **How do businesses perceive benefit and threat messages based on their collaboration style?**

The results regarding which messages are most likely to encourage businesses to take action to preserve drinking water quality in the McKenzie River shows that protection messages are more popular than threat messages. Threat messages made up four of the five messages least-likely to encourage businesses to take a certain action. The cross tabulation of this data with business's preferred collaboration style showed that there may be some nuance to which messages businesses preferred based on their preferred collaboration style.

Though no firm conclusion can be drawn, the cross tabulation results suggest that in general, businesses that preferred a transactional relationship were less likely to respond favorably to threat messages, while businesses preferring philanthropic and integrative relationships rated these messages similarly to benefit messages.

This small distinction should indicate that further study regarding threat and benefit messages and businesses should be a topic for further research for two reasons.

First, the effectiveness of threat and benefit messages is a common inquiry in the field of environmental communication (Obermiller 1995). The conversation will continue and become more important as environmental challenges become more pressing.

Second, the impact of threat versus benefit messaging has been conducted at the individual level, primarily regarding how messages convince individuals to take action regarding climate change or personal water and energy conservation (Obermiller 1995). This study was an attempt to determine whether the trends of how individuals respond to messages translated to business decision-making. In spite of the limitations of a small response rate, the suggestion that there is nuance in how businesses respond to threat and benefit messages should be cause for additional research on the subject. There are at least two topics to consider:

- Individuals make decisions on behalf of businesses. How do personal values and business values interact when people make these decisions?
- Research suggests that individuals are more or less likely to be influenced by threat messages based on the complexity of their understanding of the issue at hand (Obermiller 1995). Generally speaking, a more complex understanding indicates higher receptiveness to threat messages.

## **Does messaging influence business' propensity to take action?**

The results indicate that some messages may be more effective for recruiting business to take action to protect drinking water quality by joining the VIP. The most effective message incorporates the most information and combines a number of motivations into a single message. This suggests that the complexity of the message contributes to its success, rather than being confusing or unclear. A discussion of how benefit and threat messages influence a business's propensity to take action is included above. A larger sample size would add nuance and robustness to this research.

One thing that remains unclear regarding messaging and spurring action is the medium through which the message is conveyed. This process has used a combination of written communication and face-to-face interactions at focus groups. It remains unclear whether written communication alone is enough for a business to commit to joining the VIP.

It is possible that messages need to be successful in convincing businesses to take an intermediate step such as attending an interest meeting, or having an in-person conversation with EWEB staff, in order to convince businesses to join the program. EWEB will continue to explore the possibility that face-to-face communication is necessary for recruitment as the program develops and begins business enrollment in the program. If this future recruitment and enrollment process is documented, the findings could provide process-based insight into business and nonprofit partnership recruitment.

## **Conclusion**

Businesses are important partners for water-quality protection, and organizations seeking partnerships with businesses need to understand the values and motivations of potential business partners in order to effectively influence them to take action. This research suggests that businesses respond more strongly to some messages than others, but a small sample size limits the applicability of this report, and the strength of its findings.

This research project attempted to add nuance to existing research in the fields of collaboration and environmental communication. Research combining these fields is limited and research regarding specifically how to communicate with businesses desiring a specific type of collaborative relationship with a nonprofit does not exist. Though findings are weak, loose trends in the effectiveness of threat messaging and benefit messaging based on the business's preferred collaboration type indicate that this is an appropriate area of study to continue inquiry.

The process of administering a survey to approximately 130 business owners and representatives in the Eugene, Springfield, and McKenzie River contributed to the research for this report and also served as an education process for informing businesses about the development of the VIP. The findings of this report, along with the process of the research itself both contribute to the creation of a business engagement program as part of the VIP to protect drinking water quality in the McKenzie River.

## Implications

This research has a number of implications for other public utilities pursuing relationships with businesses to meet drinking water quality protection goals. These results may be helpful beyond the specific context and also relate to other types of nonprofit/business relationships.

- Businesses are willing and able to partner with nonprofits for innovative programs. Many businesses contacted were generally interested in the idea of partnering with EWEB for drinking water quality protection, even though they might not have been interested in attending program development focus groups or completing a survey.
- Businesses were generally receptive to the idea of pursuing relationships more involved than the traditional philanthropic relationship. This suggests that EWEB's efforts to create a menu of engagement strategies that will appeal to a variety of businesses was worthwhile and will ultimately increase the number of businesses that would participate in the program.
- Though the results are limited, businesses prefer to have stronger relationships with organizations pursuing programs for environmental protection and/or community benefit (?). Characteristics of philanthropic relationships were generally less appealing to business respondents than relationships that required more interaction.
- Conclusions regarding business' perceived benefits of participation suggest recruitment messages should balance altruistic messages with messages about what the business will receive out of the partnership. This finding as described above also indicates the importance of messaging around community benefits that the business will help create, in addition to the benefits that the business will receive.
- Businesses are not receptive to the language of the collaboration continuum. Organizations pursuing relationships with business should focus on the programmatic elements of the relationship to illustrate the possible relationship.
- The collaboration continuum may be a useful construct for organizing business relationships internally. Organizations creating engagement strategies can determine if this construct is useful for their purposes, even if they avoid it for communication to potential partners.
- Given the suggestion from research findings that businesses are prepared to pursue more integrated relationships with nonprofits to meet goals that would benefit the community, further research should look into whether these integrated relationships yield better programmatic outcomes.

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- .

# APPENDIX II: SURVEY INSTRUMENT

Qualtrics Survey Software

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## Default Question Block

### A Survey of Eugene, Springfield, and McKenzie Watershed Area Businesses

This survey is part of a research partnership between EWEB and the University of Oregon. We are asking a non-random sample of business representatives in the Eugene, Springfield, and McKenzie River areas to complete a 10- to 15-minute online questionnaire about their responses to certain messages regarding water quality protection, interest in proposed engagement pathways, and the program's desired benefits.

Your participation is voluntary, and your responses are confidential. When you return your questionnaire, your name will be deleted from our email list. Neither your name nor your business' name will be connected to your answers. Any report we may publish with results from this survey will not include information that will make it possible to identify a participant.

Businesses that complete the questionnaire may benefit by having their views considered in the creation of the new business engagement program. If you choose not to participate, it will not affect any current or future relationship you may have with the University of Oregon or with EWEB. You are free to withdraw at any time for whatever reason. Simply close your browser window. There is no penalty or loss of benefits for not taking part or for stopping your participation.

If you have any questions or comments about this study, we would be happy to talk with you. Please contact Laura Stroud at [lstroud@uoregon.edu](mailto:lstroud@uoregon.edu).

By clicking the forward arrow below, you are consenting to participation in this study.

**We are interested in the types of messages that resonate or do not resonate with your decision making as a business owner or representative. We hope to identify whether certain statements would be likely or unlikely to motivate businesses to take action to protect the water quality of the McKenzie River. The statements all relate to values and objectives that are the foundation of EWEB's VIP program.**

Consider that the following statements represent the core values of EWEB's VIP program to protect the water quality of the McKenzie River. Please indicate how likely or unlikely it is that the following statements would **influence your business to take action** to conserve the water quality of the McKenzie River by joining EWEB's VIP program.

	Very Likely	Likely	Neither Likely nor Unlikely	Unlikely	Very Unlikely
The McKenzie River is central to the health of our economy and community.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The McKenzie River is more than just a river; it's an icon that defines the area's identity.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The McKenzie River should be protected for future generations to continue providing clean water, recreation, economic and community health, and identity.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Protecting the McKenzie River Watershed will conserve important habitat for many different plant and animal species.	<input type="radio"/>				
Protecting the McKenzie River will conserve fish species like salmon, steelhead and trout.	<input type="radio"/>				
Protecting the McKenzie River will maintain the river's high water quality.	<input type="radio"/>				
Protecting the McKenzie River will protect Eugene's source of clean drinking water.	<input type="radio"/>				
Threats to the McKenzie River will pollute and degrade a highly valued community asset.	<input type="radio"/>				
Threats to McKenzie River water quality will result in higher treatment costs that will be passed on to ratepayers.	<input type="radio"/>				
Threats to McKenzie River water quality will degrade habitat for sport fish species such as trout and steelhead.	<input type="radio"/>				
Threats to McKenzie River water quality will not go away on their own and will likely get worse without action.	<input type="radio"/>				

After reading through the statements above, what are your general reactions regarding the importance of joining the VIP program to protect the water quality of the McKenzie River?

Engagement pathways are defined by three broad categories. A **philanthropic** relationship is a traditional charitable donor and recipient relationship. A **transactional** relationship consists of explicit resource exchanges that focus on specific activities, such as a specific event sponsorship or providing program-related discounted products and services. *Resources refer to time, money and services.* An **integrative** relationship pursues activities that merge the actions of the donor and recipient into a partnership that meets mutually determined goals. An example would be a landscaping business that worked with EWEB to connect with upriver landowners wanting to contract riverbank restoration projects.

We would like to gauge your interest in elements of a partnership as they relate to the types of engagement outlined above. The questions below refer to elements of a potential relationship between your business and EWEB. The three statements in each matrix refer to how those elements might exist in a **philanthropic**, **transactional**, or **integrative** relationship.

**Importance to Mission:** the level of impact that the partnership's activities have on your business' mission.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I am interested in a program where my contributions help the partner meet their mission regardless of whether or not my contributions help achieve my business' mission.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am interested in a program where my contributions help meet my business' mission and the recipient's mission, though the missions are dissimilar.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am interested in a program where my contributions help meet a mission that my business and the partner share.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**Breadth of Donation Types:** The *breadth* of the types of donations, which could include your business' time, money or services. This program will integrate a number of ways for businesses to donate outside of the typically seen monetary donation.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I am interested in a program that provides my business the option to donate money.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am interested in a program that provides options for what my business can donate time, money, or services and allows me to choose one option.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am interested in a program that provides options for what my business can donate time, money or services and allows my business to chose a combination of options.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**Scope of Activities:** the number of activities that the donor and recipient mutually engage in. Activities may include financial donations, event sponsorship, volunteer days, and more.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I am interested in a program where my business works with the partner for one specific activity.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am interested in a program where my business works with the partner for a few specific activities.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

I am interested in a program where my business works with the partner for a broad range of activities.

**Interaction Level:** the amount of interaction required annually to maintain the donor/recipient relationship.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I am interested in a program that requires minimal interaction with the partner outside of providing a donation.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am interested in a program that requires interaction with the partner in a few, well-defined ways.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am interested in a program that requires a close interaction with the partner on a regular basis.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**Leadership Relationship:** At what decision-making level would you like your business to be able to participate? Some relationship types may only need continued maintenance once established, while other relationship types may necessitate ongoing communication with decision-making staff.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I am interested in participating in a program with relationships that any employee at my business can maintain.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am interested in a program with relationships that a community outreach employee or other specific staff member can maintain.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I am interested in a program with relationships that management employees who make decisions on behalf of the business can maintain.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

**Strategic value:** the level of importance that the partnership has in your business' strategic plan for meeting its mission.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
I prefer to participate in a program that is not a significant component of my business's strategy for meeting its mission.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I prefer to participate in a					

program that is a somewhat important component of my business' strategy for meeting its mission.

<input type="radio"/>				
<input type="radio"/>				

I prefer to participate in a program that is a core component of my business' strategy for meeting its mission.

The statements in each chart above correspond from top to bottom to philanthropic, transactional and integrative relationship stages. Considering all of the elements of the relationship, which relationship type seems generally most appropriate or appealing for your business?

Please select only one.

- Philanthropic
- Transactional
- Integrative
- None
- Do Not Know

EWEB has developed some options for businesses wanting to support drinking water quality protection. If you chose to participate in the program, which of the following options are you most interested in considering for your business?

Please select all that apply.

- Business makes a monetary donation
- Business creates a product or service to generate revenue for donation
- Business provides discounts on products or services for landowners participating in the Voluntary Incentive program
- Business donates employee volunteer time for restoration projects
- Business sponsors community event hosted by EWEB
- Business has \$1 opt-out fee on customer's receipts for services related to watershed and proceeds are donated to program
- Business provides discounts on restoration services for Voluntary Incentive Program property owners
- Business receives reimbursements for approved restoration services on Voluntary Incentive Program property owner land
- Other (Please Specify):

**EWEB wants to better understand business' motivations for wanting to partner for drinking water quality protection. We understand that there are combinations of reasons a business may be interested.**

Please indicate whether you agree or disagree each statement that summarizes a motivation for partnering with EWEB.

	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
If my business participated in EWEB's VIP, it would be because it is the right thing to do.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
If my business participated in EWEB's VIP, it would be because I want my business to contribute to the community.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
If my business participated in EWEB's VIP, it would be because I want my business to be a good steward to the environment.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
If my business participated in EWEB's VIP, it would be because I believe my business impacts the environment and I want to mitigate those impacts.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
If my business participated in EWEB's VIP, it would be because I want my business to protect our community's natural resources.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
If my business participated in EWEB's VIP, it would be because my business will receive positive recognition in EWEB's newsletters to customers.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
If my business participated in EWEB's VIP, it would be because my business will receive positive recognition at community events that EWEB hosts like EWEB's Earth Day Celebration.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
If my business participated in EWEB's VIP, it would be because my business will receive positive recognition to landowners along the McKenzie River.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
If my business participated in EWEB's VIP, it would be because my business will receive positive recognition on EWEB's social media sites.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
If my business participated in EWEB's VIP, it would be because my business will get connected to EWEB's 80,000 customers.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Do you have any other motivations not mentioned here that would influence your decision to partner with EWEB for drinking water quality protection?

**It is essential for EWEB to know a few details about your business in order to create opportunities for business partnerships. The following responses will not be connected with your name or the name of your business.**

What type of business are you representing?

- Distribution/production
- Lodging
- Manufacturing
- Retail
- Service
- Wholesale
- Other (Please specify):

How many people does your business employ?

- 1-5
- 6-15
- 16-40
- 41-80
- More than 80

Where does your business provide goods and services?

Please Check all that apply.

- Locally
- Regionally
- Nationally
- Internationally

The following statements are designed to determine businesses' attitudes towards sustainability or drinking water quality protection. Please indicate whether you agree or disagree with each statement. Answers should reflect actual conditions rather than aspirations.

	Click to write Scale point 1	Click to write Scale point 2	Click to write Scale point 3
There is a culture of sustainability in my business.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My business has a sustainability champion, director, or equivalent.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Clean water is essential to the success of my business.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
I understand that my business has a "water footprint".	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Clean drinking water is essential to my businesses' activities.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My business uses a significant amount of water.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
My business directly contributes to protecting the water quality of the McKenzie River.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The success of my business depends on the McKenzie River remaining a place where people want to recreate.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Please share any other comments you'd like to share about EWEB's VIP program or your business' perspectives on water quality protection efforts in the McKenzie.

Thank you for your response!